



## Toxic Release Inventory

Office of Program Support

(317) 232-8172 • (800) 988-7901

[www.idem.IN.gov](http://www.idem.IN.gov)

100 N. Senate Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46204

***U.S. EPA's 2020 report on 2018 data shows that most of the toxic chemical waste managed at industrial facilities in the U.S. was not released into the environment. In fact, 88% of wastes were managed through the use of preferred practices such as recycling, energy recovery, or treatment.***

### Description:

- The Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) is a database of information about releases and transfers of toxic chemicals from facilities in certain industry sectors such as manufacturing, metal mining, electric utilities and commercial hazardous waste. Only businesses that manufacture, process, or otherwise use chemicals at or above certain thresholds must report. TRI reporters mostly consist of utilities and manufacturers with 10 or more employees.
- A release generally refers to a chemical that is emitted to air or water, or placed in some type of land disposal. TRI reports provide information about chemicals that are recycled, treated, burned for energy recovery, disposed, or otherwise released into the environment. Reporting facilities must also include information about accidental releases or spills that occurred during the reporting year.
- The reporting of TRI information is mandated by federal law. Facilities in Indiana that are subject to TRI reporting requirements must submit their information to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA).
- The TRI collects data on approximately 650 chemicals and chemical categories and provides the public with information about:
  - Chemicals that are emitted to air or water, or placed in some type of land disposal.
  - On-site releases and other disposal of toxic chemicals to air, surface water and land.
  - On-site recycling, treatment and energy recovery associated with TRI chemicals.
  - Off-site transfers of toxic chemicals from TRI facilities to other locations.
  - Pollution prevention activities at facilities.
  - Releases of lead, mercury, dioxin and other persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic (PBT) chemicals.
- The TRI's primary goal is to inform communities and citizens about specific chemical use in their area.
  - Government agencies, such as local emergency management agencies, use TRI information in their emergency planning activities to help ensure local responders are trained and prepared in the event of an accidental spill or release.
  - Citizens can access TRI data to learn about the activities of facilities operating in their neighborhood.
  - Regulators and others involved in monitoring environmental quality may use the TRI data in evaluating how the activities of our businesses and industries could be impacting our environment.

### Environmental Impacts:

- TRI has encouraged businesses to reduce their use of toxic chemicals by improving efficiency in their processes and utilizing innovative technology.
- The process of reporting to the TRI has encouraged businesses to be more efficient in their chemical use and management activities.
- TRI has helped regulators and industry work together to identify and implement pollution prevention initiatives which helps businesses reduce costs and protect the environment.

- Similar to previous years, in 2018, most of the toxic chemical waste managed at industrial facilities in the U.S. was **not released into the environment**, according to the U.S. EPA's annual Toxics Release Inventory report. U.S. EPA's 2020 report on 2018 data shows that **88% of the wastes were, instead, managed through the use of preferred practices, such as recycling, energy recovery, or treatment.**
- TRI data alone cannot be used to draw conclusions about risk to human health or the environment. The TRI does not provide all of the factors necessary for risk analysis, including the toxicity of a given chemical, the fate of the chemical in the environment, the concentration of the chemical, and duration of human or other exposure to the chemical after it is released.

#### **IDEM's Role:**

- IDEM is responsible for protecting human health and the environment while providing for safe industrial, agricultural, commercial, and governmental operations vital to a prosperous economy.
- IDEM's Office of Program Support's (OPS's) Pollution Prevention and Compliance Assistance Section actively works with facilities around the state to help them reduce chemical waste at the source through process improvements, switching to less toxic chemicals, and identifying opportunities to recycle and reuse materials. OPS staff provides technical and compliance assistance to companies on state and federal environmental regulatory issues, including the requirements of the federal TRI program.

#### **Facility's Role:**

- A business must file a TRI report if it:
  - Employs the equivalent of ten or more full time employees;
  - Falls under a North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code which requires them to report; and
  - Manufactures, processes or otherwise uses a listed toxic chemical above established thresholds.
- Facilities must submit reports about their yearly chemical releases and waste management activities by July 1 for the preceding year.

#### **Citizens' Role:**

- Indiana residents are encouraged to learn more about the TRI and possible chemical hazards in their community by visiting the U.S. EPA and IDEM TRI websites.
- Where there are concerns about possible exposure to potentially harmful chemicals, citizens should contact local authorities who can enlist the help of emergency response personnel. Unusual odors, visible gases or unusually colored flames, or the increased pitch of a relief valve on a pressurized container, may indicate a possible problem.

#### **More Information:**

- For more information on TRI data for Indiana, visit IDEM's website at [www.IN.gov/idem/prevention/2355.htm](http://www.IN.gov/idem/prevention/2355.htm).
- For assistance with questions about the TRI, or to discuss concerns with IDEM, contact the Pollution Prevention and Compliance Assistance Section in IDEM's Office of Program Support, at (800) 988-7901 (toll free) or (317) 232-8172 (direct).
- For information on TRI reporting requirements, visit U.S. EPA's website at [www.epa.gov/toxics-release-inventory-tri-program](http://www.epa.gov/toxics-release-inventory-tri-program) or call U.S. EPA's Toxics Release Inventory Information Center at (800) 424-9346 (select option #3 from the menu). For information on the TRI National Analysis, visit [www.epa.gov/trinationalanalysis/introduction-2017-tri-national-analysis](http://www.epa.gov/trinationalanalysis/introduction-2017-tri-national-analysis).